GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2161
ANSWERED ON:03.12.2001
CONSTRUCTION OF BIG DAMS
SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (PATIL)

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Commission on Dams has advocated against construction of big dams due to negative impact on Environment and its socio-economic remifications;

(b) if so, the number of big dams under construction at present in the country;

(c) whether the Government propose to review its policy of construction of big dams;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SMT. BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY)

(a) Yes, Sir. The World Commission on Dams (WCD) an NGO funded by international agencies, in its report has, inter-alia, stated that the impact due to large dams are more negative than positive and have led to the impoverishment and suffering of millions of people.

(b) The number of big dams under construction (as per National Register of Large Dams published by CentralWater Commission, 1994), in the country, state-wise, are given in Annex.

(c)to (e) There is no proposal to review the policy of construction of big dams in the country as a result of the WCD report. India has adequate policy and legal framework to take care of environment and people affected by projects. India has enshrined environmental protection in its consitution and there is a well laid out legislative and institutional mechanism to implement these provisions. Keeping in view the socio-economic ethos of the country, Government of India has already framed and adopted a National Water Policy, which provides guidelines for various facets of water resources development. Further, India has been constantly improving and updating its policy formulation and implementation strategies for dam projects so as to make them responsive to local, regional and national demands as well as socially and environmentally sustainable. Keeping this in view, major, medium and minor irrigation projects, including sustainable groundwater exploitation, alongwith rainwater harvesting using indigenous techniques are all integrated in the planning approach. The role of dams in India cannot be substituted but it is to be supplemented by other water conservation practices and technologies. To ensure continued self-sufficiency in foodgrain production and also to meet the energy, drinking water and industrial needs of our growing population, India proposes to continue with its programme of dam construction to create another 200 billion cubic metres of storage in the next 25 years. The guidelines for development suggested by World Commissionon Dams in their final report are not a necessity for India as these are utopian in nature and are incompatible with our national development imperatives.

ANNEX

(ANNEX TO ANSWER TO LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2161 FOR ANSWER ON 03.12.2001)

THE NUMBER OF BIG DAMS UNDER CONSTRUCTION IN THE COUNTRY; State-wise

Sr. No.	State	Number of Dams
1.	Andhra Pradesh	26
2.	Bihar	33

3.	Gujarat	71
4.	Karnataka	28
5.	Kerala	16
6.	Madhya Pradesh	147
7	Maharashtra	300
8.	Orissa	18
9.	Rajasthan	4
10.	Tamil Nadu	13
11.	Uttar Pradesh	22
12.	West Bengal	5
13.	Other States	12
Total		695